

# American Research Center In Egypt, Inc.

## NEWSLETTER



---

NUMBER NINETY-FOUR

SUMMER 1975

---

Twenty Nassau St.  
Princeton, New Jersey 08540  
United States of America

No. 2 Kasr el Dubbara  
Garden City, Cairo  
Arab Republic of Egypt



# AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT

INCORPORATED

20 NASSAU STREET  
PRINCETON, N. J. 08540  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
TELEPHONE: 609-921-3797



NO. 2 KASR EL DOUBARA  
GARDEN CITY, CAIRO  
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

NEWSLETTER NUMBER NINETY-FOUR

SUMMER 1975

## CONTENTS

	Page
Notes from Princeton .....	1
The Emergence of Egyptian Women into Public Life of Contemporary Egypt ..... by Kathleen Howard Merriam	3
A Background to Feminism in Egypt and Tunisia ..... by Michelle Raccagni	8
The Center's Guest Book .....	15

The Newsletter is published quarterly; subscription rate, \$5 per year; edited by the Directors. All opinions expressed by authors are those of the authors themselves and do not reflect ARCE policy or endorsement. Publications Committee:

Gerald E. Kadish, Chairman	Arthur Goldschmidt, Jr. William H. Peck
Hans Godeicke	Speros Vryonis, Jr.

ARCE Membership Dues (Include Newsletter and Journal of ARCE):

Individual .....	\$15 to \$500
Student .....	10
Research Supporting (Institutions) ....	2,500
Institutional .....	500 and up

President ..... Morroe Berger	Secretary and U.S.
Vice-President ..... Wm. Kelly Simpson	Director ..... Lily M. Brown
Treasurer ..... R. Bayly Winder	Cairo Director.. John Dorman





## NOTES FROM PRINCETON

### Annual Meeting

The 1975 Annual Meetings of the American Research Center in Egypt will be held at the Johns Hopkins University on Friday and Saturday, November 14 and 15. The meeting of members will follow registration on Friday morning, and most of the remainder of the two days will be devoted to a Program of Papers. There will be a reception on Saturday evening.

Host for the meetings on behalf of Johns Hopkins is Professor Hans Goedicke. Readers who wish to present papers should write to Professor Goedicke at the Department of Near Eastern Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland 21218, enclosing an abstract of the paper, at least by September 30.

Registration fee for the meetings will again be \$3.00; provision will be made for pre-registration.

### Governors' Meeting

The agenda of the May budgetary meeting of the Board of Governors included the following:

The U.S. Visiting Professor at the Center in 1975-6 will be Professor Richard P. Mitchell of the University of Michigan. In addition to pursuing his own research, Professor Mitchell will assist the fellows, especially the junior fellows with finding sources and making contacts in the scholarly community. An Egyptian Scholar in Residence, who has not been named, will also help the fellows.

The Governors endorsed ARCE's effort to gain financial support for the forthcoming International Conference of Egyptologists to be held in Cairo in September, 1976. Co-chairmen of the conference are Professors T. S  ve-S  derbergh of Uppsala, William K. Simpson of Yale University and MFA, Boston and Dietrich Wildung of Munich. The headquarters for the organization of the conference are in Munich.

Fund-raising, a new Center building, and new Director for the Center drew much of the Governors' attention.

### New Address

On or about November 1, 1975, the address of the Princeton office will be:

American Research Center in Egypt  
ORC Building, North Harrison Street  
Princeton, New Jersey 08540



### Tour

Plans for ARCE's tour of Egypt November 18 to December 5, 1975 are almost finalized. The tour will be led by Dr. Charles F. Nims of the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago and former Director of Chicago House at Luxor. Scholars who are familiar with medieval and modern Egypt will also participate. A few spaces are still available; for information write to the Princeton office of ARCE or Crystal World Travel Service Inc., 2001 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Va. 22202.

### Publications

Editions de Belles-Lettres, Geneva continues the series of Egyptological classics with "Textbände" as a complement to "Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopen."

University of California Extension Media Center at Berkeley offers 99 Audiotapes: Perspectives on the Middle East, programs of lectures, interviews and other communications from a broad range of perspectives.

Lee & Lee Booksellers, New York, Catalogue Number 10 is "The Ancient World with special emphasis on Egyptology."

### Paintings

Somewhat abstract paintings in oil of the monuments of ancient Egypt are the hobby of Reginald H. Coleman, artist with the Oriental Institute's epigraphic and architectural survey at Luxor for the past nineteen years. Visitors may see the paintings at Chicago House in Luxor or at his home in London.

### Translators

Linguistic Systems, Inc., Cambridge, Mass. is interested in contacting qualified people who may wish to do free-lance translations, English into Arabic or Farsi, and vice versa. The address is P.O. Box 31, 116 Austin Street; translations manager is Ignacio Jauregui.

## THE EMERGENCE OF EGYPTIAN WOMEN INTO PUBLIC LIFE OF CONTEMPORARY EGYPT

Kathleen Howard Merriam, ARCE Fellow  
Bowling Green State University

Overview: Egyptian women have actively participated in national life since Hoda Sharawi led a group of veiled women down Cairo streets in 1919 protesting the British occupation of Egypt. Women finally achieved voting rights in 1956. Today, the wife of President Sadat presides over feminist congresses actively promoting the improvement of women's status, and a woman, Dr. Aisha Rateb, is Minister of Social Affairs.

Who and what manner of women are those who have emerged as successors to Hoda Sharawi and now work alongside Madame Sadat and Aisha Rateb? What factors have contributed to the emergence of women into public life and what have been the prevalent career courses pursued by these women? This preliminary study, based on interviews with forty-four career women in different sectors of public life, addresses itself to identification of the patterns of women's entrance into public life. The focus is on the contemporary leadership, as their careers have spanned two different regimes: a traditional monarchy succeeded by a military reformist regime led by Gamal Abdel Nasser. Of interest here is the impact made by political and structural changes on the lives of women and on their recruitment into the national leadership. Conversely, what role have Egyptian women played in producing these changes?

The major network of institutions of the Egyptian political system are the government bureaucracy, the National Assembly, the voluntary service associations, the educational institutions, the mass media network, the Arab Socialist Union, business enterprises, and the labor syndicates. Leading career women were sought out, therefore, in these institutions for interview and study.

The pattern of women emerging from the home to assume public roles is a product of Egypt's religious-cultural heritage and the political experience of being ruled by a series of foreign conquerors until into the twentieth century. The history of Egypt has been related elsewhere and space does not permit elaboration here. It is sufficient to point out that (1) the Muslim heritage, marked by the Shari'ah, a set of prescriptions for social and ethical behavior which both limited the woman and liberated her, depended to a great extent on male interpretations; and (2) Westerners changed women's conceptions of themselves and their capacities.



The emancipation of women was promoted by the establishment of Western educational institutions, direct contact with Westerners, and by Egyptian male intellectuals via the mass media. An important example, repeatedly mentioned by women interviewed for its contribution to the community life and for its education of girls, is the American College for Girls founded in 1909. Because of the limited number of schools for women until the 1930's and the concentration of political and social awareness among a small landowning and professional class, the desire for change in the women's position remained confined until the Revolution of 1952.

The nationalist movement of 1919 spurred a group of upper class Egyptian women into action. In the frustrating years between 1919 and 1923 conditions favored women's participation in the nationalist movement: support was welcomed from any quarter against a superior military power. Despite the initial objections of their husbands, who were organizing the movement, a group of Egyptian women, led by Hoda Sharawi, marched down the Cairo streets in protest against the British refusal to allow nationalist leader Saad Zaghlul to present Egypt's case for independence at the 1919 Paris Conference. These matrons' courageous defiance of British soldiers and their organizational skill in caring for the wounded won them grateful verbal support from their male colleagues, Saad Zaghlul in particular.

Hoda Sharawi and her supporters built on their nationalist activities by organizing the Egyptian Feminist Union in 1923 to demand political rights for women. Symbolizing their emergence from the seclusion of the home, Madame Sharawi, upon returning from a women's conference in Rome, ceremoniously discarded her veil, again against her husband's objections, and so set the example for other women.

Egypt's limited independence and the socially conservative character of the nationalist movement led Hoda Sharawi and her colleagues to pursue a gradualist strategy for gaining political acceptance of women in the political arena. They promoted women's social modernization through programs for the expansion of women's literacy, education, general health improvement, child welfare, and improvement of women's working conditions.

For the first thirty years of Egypt's independence, therefore, Egyptian upper class women provided the much needed initiative for solving the internal social problems that the national leadership failed to provide because of the perceived political priority of securing full independence and their own social consciousness. At the same time, these women were "earning" their right to full de jure participation by developing their intellectual and organizational capacities in areas socially considered suitable for women's attention: family related problems.

The 1952 reformist regime, proclaiming principles of equality and justice and commitment to improving the lives of Egyptians, could not very well refuse to grant women de jure political rights. Consequently, in the 1956 Constitution, women were granted the right to vote. Symbolic encouragement of women's political participation came with the appointment in 1962 of a woman for the first time to a ministerial post: Minister of Social Affairs. However, as the Nasser regime searched for an ideology which would be acceptable to the vast majority of the Egyptians, the tradition-bound peasants, not much room existed for a radical approach to improving women's status. Nevertheless, perhaps more important in the long run, was the expansion of the educational system for women along with men. In an interview with Madame Jehan es Sadat, she asserted to this writer that the expanded educational opportunities are the key to female emancipation, as education tends to develop a women's leadership pool as well as a liberalization of men's perception of the female role.

Typologies: What categories of women have entered public life and what factors have contributed to this entrance process? The thesis of this preliminary study of three generations is that personality and a high socio-economic status were the crucial factors for the first two generations. With the expansion of educational opportunity, particularly since World War II, personality alone takes on greater importance as women struggled against conservative parents, colleagues, and unfavorable economic conditions to assume independent careers for themselves and to emerge as leaders. Insofar as environmental factors affect this process, governmental regime sponsorship of education, familial encouragement or discouragement, and economic circumstances are factors that cut across class lines in the attainment of education.

Change could be identified among the women interviewed in the background factors influencing the choice of career from generation to generation. A distinction should be made, however, between generations as to what constitutes a difficult goal for a female of each generation, given her socio-economic status and environment of acceptability or non-acceptability.

For the older generation (those between fifty and sixty-five years), named here as Generation One, tremendous obstacles from family and custom had to be overcome, despite advantages of wealth and access to foreign influences. Hence, a key factor for this generation was a strong personality.

For Generation Two, the next generation consisting of those between forty and fifty years, wealth becomes somewhat less important as educational opportunities are expanded to reach the middle class and attitudes toward the role of women are modified somewhat by war and the increase in communications. Nevertheless, obstacles remain and personality, specifically persistence, continues to be important in the face of familial and societal opposition.



For Generation Three, the younger generation comprising those between twenty-five and forty years, the advent of Nasser marks a triumph for the middle and lower middle classes if not for the lower classes in the rural areas. With the expansion of education and economic necessity (from sequestered upper middle class to upwardly mobile lower middle class) personality becomes less important with the generally improved environment. However, obstacles remain in the form of traditional social norms retained in the family regarding role differentiation. Personal drive continues to be important for those who want to get to the top, as it does in every society. For those who merely seek to be participants in the modern world, familial obstacles may appear which cut across socio-economic lines and must be explained in cultural terms.

The First Generation: This older generation includes two former under secretaries in the Government, one in the Ministry of Education and one in the Ministry of Social Affairs; a leader in the health improvement field; a political feminist; a leading organizer of population and family planning programs whose activities in behalf of women's concerns brought her appointment to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, and two of the eight members of the current National Assembly.

This group matured during a period of growing intellectual concern for social reform amidst a tug of war between the forces of Islamic traditionalism and secularism. During the years 1925-1950 there was sporadic reform implementation, an important example being the moderate expansion of educational opportunities for women.

The Feminist Union under Hoda Sharawi's leadership was moderately successful as promoters of this social reform. Comprised as it was of women of the national elite, this Union also provided inspiration to those strong-willed women to pursue careers outside the home. A key environmental force, however, appears to have been a father's encouragement, understandable perhaps in view of men's greater opportunity and likelihood of possessing superior education. For those women who were intellectually inclined who excelled in school with parental encouragement, university education was earned either abroad or in Egypt. For those who were not so intellectually inclined, but who nevertheless were imbued with social consciousness by the school, family, or both, social work was an accessible and appropriate activity.

The prevailing social norms upheld the value of the family as the basic societal unit and the role of the mother as chief socializer within this unit. As women traditionally received their identity as mothers, the prevailing goal for young women was marriage. This older generation added two important elements to this pattern: a secular education through secondary level, usually obtained at a foreign institution, and the assumption of some outside activity. Voluntary social work and the professional field of education were the two major outlets, intimately related as they are to the traditional wife mother roles. But in a changing

political world, these activities provided the springboard for non-home related public service activity for the more ambitious.

The Second Generation: Generation Two numbers thirteen women between forty and fifty years. We find more cases of middle class and lower class background, and a majority who had earned a university bachelor's degree or better. Only two did not pursue professional careers in government, journalism, academe, or in business; yet these two were elected members of the National Assembly.

This generational group includes two ministers, two foreign ministry officials, two members of the National Assembly, one syndicate leader, and one feminist publicist. As with the older generation, this generation is marked by considerable awareness of breaking into a male-dominated professional world. Individual stubbornness, however, was aided by growing societal acceptance of the desirability of higher education for women and its availability, the growing legitimacy of professional careers, and the political changes taking place favoring the ambitious woman.

Six of the thirteen have become politically involved, five joined the Arab Socialist Union through their professional institutions because of the opportunity for career advancement, which other women's organizations failed to provide. The sixth belongs to the Marxist movement which is impatient with the ASU's co-optive organizational orientation. Five other women have not become involved in the ASU as they were too deeply immersed in their professional careers in government or did not consider the organization sufficiently promising as a modernizing institution to merit attention. In contrast with the pre-World War Two period, class background does not appear to be a major factor determining political involvement. Those with professional, middle or upper class background became involved in the Arab Socialist Union and those with lower socio-economic background have chosen not to become involved. In the cases of those of middle or upper middle class background, some joined because of the new opportunities afforded them, and to become acceptable to the regime. But for some of those of lower socio-economic origin, the organization has not yet provided the vitality to draw these women who launched their careers by individual effort.

The Third Generation: Generation Three includes a predominant number of professional career women. The class origins of the women are primarily of professional middle class, and are not necessarily typical of this generation at large. A majority of the group interviewed was educated at foreign schools in Egypt and six have received doctorates, three of these abroad. Two are members of Parliament: one is illustrative of the more traditional base for emergence, that is through social work, and the other of the modern technocratic pattern.



Concluding Note: What Role Model for Egyptian Women?

Is any one of these patterns of emergence into public service providing a model for Egyptian women? At the present time, one cannot say that any particular pattern is idealized. For these patterns strike responsive chords for different segments of the population. Social service has provided a most accessible route to the public role. The social service leadership is comprised of a variety of personality types and backgrounds. Some have outgoing personalities and enjoy the demanding political life of constituency tours. Their image varies from group to group: For their own political constituency, comprised for the most part of lower socioeconomic groups, they provide inspiration. But it is questionable whether they are thought of more as women leaders than as the elected political representatives of the areas which are therefore the benefactors, or "mother figures." For women in other fields of public service, these social service leaders seem to be evaluated primarily according to the degree of formal education achieved. Nevertheless, acknowledgement of their success in public social service is accorded by election to parliament and is recognized as such by these other contemporaries.

For other women, particularly the younger university generation, the second and third types are "more relevant." Those women who have emerged in this manner provide the example of realization of individual non-sex-stereotyped capabilities. In an era when women are obliged to work, even if they do not so desire, to supplement the family's income, the implications of the diversification of roles by these career women are particularly important.

Perhaps it is a commentary on the contribution of the Egyptian Feminist Movement, gradual social modernization and encouragement of women on an individual basis, that today's young Egyptian woman takes for granted that she will pursue higher studies if her marks so merit, and that she will work. But has she developed a consciousness of herself as an individual who can assume leadership in the public sphere?

A BACKGROUND TO FEMINISM IN EGYPT AND TUNISIA

Michelle Raccagni, ARCE Fellow  
Ph.D. Candidate, New York University

The topic of my dissertation is a comparison of feminism in Egypt and Tunisia. I chose these two countries because on the one hand no Arab country has had better organized and active feminist movements than Egypt, on the other because Tunisian women have been the first Arab women to benefit from legal equality with men.

One of the main problems with which I have had to deal is the problem of time because liberal thinkers started to advocate feminine education by the 1850's, but the problem of women's rights is still with us more than a century later.

For polemical books written in Egypt since the time of Qasim Amin, I am using the AUC library. I know there are a few books, among them the Murshid of Tahtawi published 1872, at Institut Francais d'Archeologie Orientale.

I have established contacts with the present head of the Hoda Sharawi Association, Ms. Baheega Sidky Rasheed and one of its founders, Ceza Nabarawi, and with Dr. Ahmad Khalifa, former Minister of Social Affairs and currently Chairman of the Social Research Center, who has graciously allowed me to use the private library of the Center. For two weeks I pursued research in Tunisia.

Female education has often been advocated as a means to counter the decline of muslim countries and their subservience to the West. Today, although freed from colonialism, Egypt and Tunisia have to improve their economy. The condition of their women is an important factor in reducing a galloping birth rate and in developing industries.

It is interesting to compare the evolution of feminism in these two countries because at a time when feminist ideas were well spread in Egypt, they were very slow to pick up in Tunisia. Now, on the contrary, Tunisian women are enjoying all the rights Egyptian women are still clamoring for.

In the last century, when muslim countries became painfully aware of their weakness vis-a-vis the West and the urgent need to reform their institutions, visitors to France and England were quick to notice the position of women there and considered it a possible factor of the wealth of these countries.

In 1856, in his Epistle on the Condition of the Muslim Woman, the sheikh Ibn Abi al-Diyaf - prominent in Tunisian reforms - stated that the woman should receive a good religious instruction in order to perform her duties, and a thorough domestic education to keep house properly, along with some manual skills like weaving, sewing and embroidery. Considering her heavy load of domestic work, she did not need any other type of knowledge, a statement which was already challenged by Minister Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi in his Aqwam al-Mashalik, 1867 in which he attributed the decline of muslim countries to the lack of feminine education. But all he could do during his brief tenure of office was to found the first boys secondary school in Tunisia, the Sadiki College.



In Egypt, which was more advanced in the educational field, sheikh Rifā'a al-Tahtāwī felt the need for elementary education for women. At the request of the Diwan al-madaris which included Ali Mubarrak among its members, al-Tahtāwī wrote in 1872 his al-Murshi al-amīn lil-banāt wal-banīn, in which he advocated not only the teaching of the three R's to girls but equality of rights and duties, and civics education for both sexes in order to raise responsible citizens. Although elementary education for girls was not established overnight, some girls were sent to school: to the missionary schools since 1859, to the Khedivial school al-Suyufiah, and to the waqf school al-Qarabiyah, which received about 540 pupils in 1875. Besides the few hundreds of girls taught in these new schools, there were, as had always been the case in Muslim countries, daughters of good families tutored at home.

Female education had a strong supporter in the person of Muhammad Abduh. Not only did he advocate female instruction, but he appealed for social reforms and expressed strong disapproval of polygamy. With his encouragement Sa'ad al-Bustani published his novel La Belle du Gynécée in al-Ahram in 1884, against mismatched marriages, thus causing a public scandal.

By contrast to Tunisia, Egypt was liberal and intellectually thriving. Al-Manar often took the defense of liberal Tunisians like the sheikh Ta'albi and Muhammad Shākir when attacked by ultra-conservative elements. Abduh also travelled to Tunisia to extend the society of al-'urwa al-wuthqa. Under Abduh's influence, one of its members, the sheikh Es-Senoussi wrote his Epanouissement de la Fleur in 1897, translated in French by his nephew. Although making a step in the right direction Es-Senoussi was hardly less cautious than Ibn Abī al-Diyāf. He agreed to the education of women, he would have even allowed them to be professional, but he remained very theoretical as shown by his examples. A career woman should contribute to household expenses, but if she goes to war with her husband - as a nurse or a water carrier - she is entitled to her share of the booty.

By that time in Egypt there were already enough cultured ladies to include some writers. Among them were 'Aisha Taymur, who wrote her poetry in Turkish and Persian, but published her popular novel Nata'ij al-ahwāl fīl-aqwāl wal-af'al in Arabic rhythmical prose in 1885.

She was joined by some career women of foreign origin, like Jalilah Tamerhān, a teacher at the School of Midwifery, who wrote a text book for midwives in 1865, and Zaynab Fawwāz, a Lebanese married to an Egyptian colonel, who started writing articles on the rights of women in some of the many papers founded by other Lebanese. These papers were quite numerous, thirteen ladies journals being founded between 1892 and 1908.

If their influence was exerted mostly in Christian circles, the books of Qāsim Amīn were widely read in Egypt and abroad, and caused an extraordinary uproar. His Tahrir al-mar'ah prompted Talat Harb to write a violent critic, Fasl al-khitāb fīl-mar'ah wal-hijab, to which Amīn answered by his al-mar'ah al-jadīdah dedicated to his friend Sa'ad Zaghlūl.

A campaign for women's rights was gaining impetus. One of its most distinguished participants was Malek Hifni Nasif, who defended women's rights in a series of articles in al-Jaridah, signed under the pseudonym of Bahithat al-Badiyah. Not contenting herself with the writing of articles, she submitted a list of ten demands to improve the status of women to the Islamic Congress of 1911, at which the muslim majority and the coptic minority were reconciled in order to lead a united struggle for nationalism.

All these activities were taking place when there was neither a Tunisian woman teacher to formulate any demand on behalf of other women, nor even any Tunisian woman teacher at all. With the help of the Resident General's wife, the Habous administration had opened a vocational school for girls in 1901, where eighteen pupils were taught French, some Arabic, embroidery and lace-making. At the Congress of North Africa held in Paris in 1908, Tunisian liberals demanded schools for girls. They denounced the Direction de l'Enseignement which pretended that there was no need to build schools which would remain empty, and presented as a "fine" example the Turkish and Egyptian girls system of education. They requested that mistresses be brought from Ottoman Syria and from Egypt, who could speak French but at the same time teach Arabic whose study was neglected for the sake of French. Yielding to pressure the French government formally opened a girls school in Tunis in 1908.

At that time, while Egyptian feminists deplored that fewer than 1% of Egyptian women could read, their country was nonetheless ahead in the educational field. There were about six or seven thousand Egyptian girls getting some schooling, compared to a few hundred Tunisian girls. There were lectures for women given at the Egyptian University. Prominent ladies engaged in social work such as the Dar al-difa, the Muhammad Ali al-kabir Society, the Society for the Protection of Women and Children.

While a few Tunisian men demanded more schools for girls, many books and papers were asking for improvement of the status of the Egyptian woman.

The participation of many women in the Revolution of 1919 helped crystallize all these various activities and created a favorable climate for the establishment of the Egyptian Feminist Union by Hoda Sharawi in 1923. From its incipency this movement benefited from the sympathy of many nationalists. Ali Sharawi had been a founding member of the Wafd, his widow was a friend of



Sa'ad Zaghlūl and many prominent figures in intellectual and political circles. In the program presented by the Feminist Union to members of Parliament in June, 1924, the reform of family laws and the granting of suffrage to at least literate women were only two among some two dozen requests dealing mostly with nationalist issues and general welfare.

On the contrary, in Tunis feminist revendications had nothing to do with the nationalist platform. The only advocates of reforms of the social status of women were the French Socialists, a minority in their own country. The only paper assiduously campaigning for the improvement of women's status was their paper, Tunis Socialiste, which had a very modest circulation.

The first liberal Tunisians had asked for girls schools and an increasing number of girls entered the new schools, but when the Liberal Constitutionalist Party split into Old Destour and Neo Destour there were no women active in politics and no nationalist thought of improving the condition of women to better fight French domination. On the contrary the campaign against the veil which raged between 1924 and 1929 was bitterly fought by the Nationalists. They were afraid their country would be annexed the way Algeria had been and have to fight French efforts at assimilation and even conversion, all dangers which were not faced by the Egyptians.

Under such conditions, Habib Bourguiba, speaking at a meeting organized by French socialists, declares:

Every blow against the veil modifies our customs and brings about the perturbation of our personality.

Is it therefore opportune in the present situation of Tunisia to accelerate the disappearance of our traditions, good or bad, and of all the things which prove old fashioned but which nonetheless constitute our identity, without taking into account compulsory transitory steps?

...the current situation makes it incumbent upon the Tunisians to preserve all the forms of their identity, even in vestimentary matters.

Evolution will take place, but without break nor rupture.... When Tunisian personality will be saved, at that moment, it will be time to have it evolve the necessary evolution, to correct its defects, and it will then be easy to tear off the veil.

With such opposition to change from Neo Destour leaders, it is not surprising that when Tahar al-Haddād published his book Imrā tunā fī al-sharī'ah wal-mujtama', in which he advocated changes in feminine condition, he aroused extraordinary opposition from nearly every side. His former fellow members of the Destour resented his efforts at unionization and his campaign to set up cooperatives, the French Socialists his opposition to naturalization, and the public at large the disruption he caused. The campaign against al-Haddād was much more violent than the one against Qāsin Amīn in Egypt thirty years earlier. Tha man lost his job and his Zeituna diploma, was barred from taking his law exams, and even feared for his life. All these attacks worsened his heart condition and he died, totally ignored, at age 36 in 1935.

So it seemed that women's cause in Tunisia did not make many strides. In 1940 the total number of student girls was 5,700, mostly in government schools, while it was about 220,000 in Egypt - with 15% in foreign schools but only 2,000 or 3,000 in government schools. The high proportion of girls in private and foreign schools may have been a cause of weakness in so far as it did not provide for homogeneous schooling nor, in the case of confessional schools, for propagation of reformist ideas.

From 1939 until the change of regimes in both countries, the condition of women did not change notably. Tunisia slowly increased female scholarization; the big question was not longer "should girls go to school?" but "how long should girls remain in school?" An awareness slowly spread in the public that woman's lot could be improved. Some Tunisian writers like Ali Douadji, Zin el Abidin Senoussi, and Mohammed Abd al-Khalij, started to describe the harm of mismatched marriages, repudiations and authoritarian husbands.

The great breakthrough for the Tunisian women came in 1956, when the new Code of Personal Status was promulgated. Without having asked for it, women were graciously granted by President Bourguiba a package deal which included every single right they could have thought of, except the right to marry a non-Muslim and equality in sharing inheritance. Although in the first years of their implementation only women of the highest economic strata took advantage of the new laws, word spread quickly and soon illiterate peasants were aware that they could no longer be repudiated at the whim of their husbands or even beaten up.

The Egyptian women kept improving their social advantages, were granted some important gains like suffrage and the right to be elected in 1956, and labor laws dealing with their welfare and maternity benefits. But all these were piecemeal gains. There has been so far no decisive reform like the Tunisian Code granting total equality to woman, something that the Egyptian woman despite all her fighting, propaganda and hard work, has not yet obtained.



Some Egyptian ladies are quick to point out that they are fighting for their rights, while the Tunisians had a very passive role. Doria Shafik had already noted that Atatürk had emancipated Turkish women by decree, while in Egypt an evolution of womanhood was taking place.

As far as results go, one may wish an Atatürk or a Bourguiba would grant equality to Egyptian women. So far this has not been the case despite the good will of Presidents Nasser and Sadat. There is a project of civil law which was not submitted by Sadat last year when al-Azhar - as well as Qaddafi - raised difficulties and which may be submitted soon. It would ease problems women encounter in family matters, but would not break away with the Shari'ah as the Tunisian Code does.

This is a very frustrating problem for Egyptian feminists. Why is civil equality between sexes being so readily accepted in Tunisia and not in Egypt?

It seems to me that it is mainly because of the political, religious and economic differences between the two countries.

The Neo Destour, now Parti socialiste destourien, has very thoroughly established itself all over a small country, and permeates all alleys of life, much more so than the Arab Socialist Union. As a pressure group, it has no serious challenger and its cells explain its policies to the grass root level. Even if there are disagreements about the opinions of the "Supreme Fighter," Pt. Bourguiba, those who may have taken issue on the status of women refrained from doing so because they were not in a strong enough position. The potential opponents of the Tunisian Code would have been the Conservatives and the ulamas. They often collaborated with the French, a fact Bourguiba did not fail to mention. Even without this embarrassment, the religious establishment in Tunisia has nothing of the prestige and strength of al-Azhar. The suppression of the habous in 1957 has eroded their power as has economic evolution which puts more value on technological expertise than on a Zeituna diploma.

The changes brought about by the civil code, in the words of Bourguiba who is fully aware of it, are a tremendous revolution. They are justified by the economic predicament of Tunisia which should modernize quickly and lessen demographic expansion. Tunisian leaders have actually no choice but to mobilize the idle half of the population and turn women into productive and responsible citizens.

Egypt too is now threatened by a very large demographic increase which may reduce all her economic progress to naught. Despite the conservatism of al-Azhar and of important rural masses social change will have to take place to allow the economic survival of the country. The adoption of these changes may be eased and hastened by the more militant attitude of an ever growing number of Egyptian women.

# THE CENTER'S GUEST BOOK

Among the first to register at the Center during April were the President of the ARCE, Prof. Morroe Berger, and his wife, Paula, in Cairo for two weeks. En route to Luxor to commence their first season at the site of the Akhenaten Temple in Karnak were Prof. Donald Redford and members of his expedition, including Ms. Mary Phillips Coker, Mr. George D. Hathaway and Mr. Allyn Kelley, all from Toronto. Also from Toronto were Dr. Nicholas B. Millet and Mr. and Mrs. Mark D. Burnham of the Royal Ontario Museum. Mr. LeRoy Makepeace of the Smithsonian's Office of International Programs spent several days inspecting Smithsonian-funded projects in Cairo, Luxor and Aswan. The wife and daughter of former American Ambassador to Egypt Frederick Reinhardt spent a week on the houseboat Fostat. Dr. Andrew S. Ehrenkreutz of the University of Michigan and Dr. Jere L. Bacharach of the University of Washington in Seattle, both former ARCE Fellows, used the Center as their base of operations for projects in the Islamic Museum. Dr. P. L. Shinnie transited Cairo on his return from the Sudan to the University of Calgary, Canada. The Chicago House expedition completed another season in mid-April, and Dr. and Mrs. Kent R. Weeks, Mr. and Mrs. John Romer, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Yurco took time to sign the Center's Guest Book before leaving Egypt. Mr. William H. Peck of the Detroit Institute of Arts spent almost a month in the Center and in the Egyptian Museum to organize the files of the late Dr. Edward Terrace on The Decorative Arts of Ancient Egypt.

Mr. John Horner, the newly appointed Quaker Representative for the Middle East, accompanied by his wife, Catherine, made Cairo his first stop on his initial trip through the area. Ms. Joy Dow of New York City called on us at the suggestion of Mr. Perry Rathbone, formerly of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Egyptians calling at the Center included Dr. Fekria Hawass of the Alexandria University Hospital, Inspector Salah Khattab of the Ministry of Education, the playwright Farouk Khorsheed, the former Director General of the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities Dr. Zaky Iskander and Mr. Kamal Naguib, Science Editor for Al-Ahram. Other visitors to the Center during April included: Rev. Grant S. Miller and Rev. Walter D. Cavett, both retired pastors from Auburn, New York; Mr. Ron Guyman of Auburn, California; Mr. and Mrs. Amerigo Farina of Storrs, Connecticut; Miss Mary D. Dorman of New York City; Miss Heather Merriam of Bowling Green, Ohio; Mr. Paul I. Gingrich, Jr., of Tacoma, Washington; Mr. and Mrs. Morgan Smith of Concord, Massachusetts, and Miss Tina Coyle of the Canadian Embassy in Cairo.

Early in May Professors Donadoni and Bosticco from the Universities of Rome and Florence respectively, called at the Center with three of their students. Mr. Martin R. Davies and Mr. Robert Anderson, both of the Egypt Exploration Society, stopped in. Mr. Stanley Goldberg and Miss Jeanne Livingston, photographers, spent a month in Egypt. Dr. Henry Faul and



Dr. Kenneth Foland, both from the University of Pennsylvania, were in Egypt for a three-week geological survey trip in the Eastern Desert. Dr. Halim El Dabh, of Kent State University was in Cairo for three weeks as a consultant to the Smithsonian on arranging Egyptian participation in a folk festival in Washington, D.C. Dr. Ricardo A. Caminos of Brown University passed through Cairo on his way home after a successful season in Upper Egypt. Dr. J.C. Hurewitz, ARCE Board member from Columbia University, delivered a number of lectures in Cairo under the auspices of USIS. Dr. Ezz El Din Ali Moustafa, Under Secretary in the Ministry of Higher Education, and Dr. Magdi Wahba and Dr. Hassanein Rabie, both of Cairo University, called. Other visitors to the Center during May included: Mr. Howard E. McCurdy of Washington, D.C., Miss Nancy E. Galligher, with the Peace Corps in Tunisia, Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Parker of Florida, Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Schaefer of Redwood City, California, Rev. Nelson Brown of the Michigan Council of Churches, Miss Carolyn McCormick Anderson of New York City, Miss Elizabeth May of Massachusetts, Mrs. Seham Boshra of Canada, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jacoby of Santa Monica, California. Coming from less far afield were the following Cairenes: Mrs. Howreya Teynous, Mr. S. Aboul Fetouls, Mr. Mahmoud Diab, Dr. Shadia Abdel Sayed, and Mrs. Fawzeyya el Sawy of the Ministry of Culture.

During the month of June a group from the Metropolitan Museum comprising Mr. Thomas Hoving, Dr. Christine Lilyquist and Mr. Morsches, accompanied by Mr. Solmssen of the Department of State, visited Cairo. ARCE Vice-President William Kelly Simpson of Yale and the Boston Museum arrived with his expedition, which included Dr. Timothy Kendall and Mr. Nick Thayer, to resume work in the Great Cemetery at Giza. Mrs. Ruth E. Rossiter, an Islamic scholar recently assigned to the A.I.D. Mission at the American Embassy in Cairo, joined the weekly seminars held at the Center. Prof. Edward Ochsenchlager, accompanied by Prof. Donald Hansen and Mr. Jerry Bier of the NYU Institute of Fine Arts, arrived toward the end of the month to prepare for a first season at Taposiris Magna. Dr. Daniel Crecelius, former ARCE Fellow from California State University at Los Angeles, checked in at the Center. The Center assisted in arrangements for the orientation and briefing of twenty-five visitors to the Near East under the sponsorship of the American Friends Service Committee. Mr. Joseph Belmonte of the Office of Education, DHEW, made Cairo his first stop on a quick tour of the Middle East. Others visiting the Center in June included: Dr. Ali Hassan of the Egyptian Museum, Dr. Yussef Salama of Hawamdia, Mrs. M. Zaklama of Dokki, Dr. Michael Kennedy of the University of Texas at Austin, Rev. Earl Evans Johnson of the Yale Divinity School, Mr. Jim Gallagher of ElCentro College, Dallas, Texas, Mr. E.A. Marters of Fresno, California, Mr. Donald S. Gray of the NYU Institute of Fine Arts, Mr. Dick Koresery of Bernet, New York, and Mr. Armory Dupray of the American Friends Service Committee for the Middle East.

مركز البحوث الأمريكية بمصر

Collège de France  
Égyptologie



2025 647



